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HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

ONE HUNDRED SECOND CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

SOVIET CRACKDOWN IN THE BALTIC STATES

JANUARY 17, 1991

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SOVIET CRACKDOWN IN THE BALTIC STATES

THURSDAY, JANUARY 17, 1991

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE,
Washington, DC.

The Commission met in room 210 of the Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC, at 1 p.m., Chairman Steny H. Hoyer, presiding.

Present: Chairman Steny H. Hoyer, Co-Chairman Dennis DeConcini, Senators Alfonse D'Amato, Frank Lautenberg, and Malcolm Wallop, Representatives Edward Markey, Bill Richardson, Don Ritter, Christopher Smith, John Porter, and Frank Wolf.

Also present: Representative Benjamin Cardin.

Staff present: Samuel G. Wise, staff director; Mary Sue Hafner, deputy staff director and general counsel; Jane S. Fisher, deputy staff director

Chairman HOYER. I am going to call the Helsinki Commission to order. Senator D'Amato, the ranking Republican member in the Senate and former Chairman of the Commission is with us.

We obviously meet at a time of crisis, a time when the nation's focus is on the Middle East. Nevertheless, we thought it critical to have this hearing.

As I have told Secretary Seitz, we expect to hold this hearing for just one hour. We will have a more extensive hearing, we believe, with other witnesses as well from the Lithuanian, Latvian, and Estonian communities, perhaps next week, depending upon developments, but we felt it extremely important that at this time of crisis, when the nation's attention is focused on the Middle East, that we also pay attention within the framework of the Helsinki process to the actions that are ongoing in Lithuania, Estonia, and Latvia.

From the United States' standpoint, of course, they, too, are three small nations which have been illegally absorbed into the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union has deployed troops earlier this month to the Baltic states, allegedly on the theory that they were going to enforce the conscription laws of the Soviet Union.

Those three countries, of course, have raised the issue of whether or not that is in and of itself legal within the framework of the Geneva Convention. We have, as Secretary Seitz knows, requested an opinion as to that question.

We have been informed that the Lithuanian Supreme Council Building has been turned into a fortress now. Thousands of Lithuanians are maintaining a 24-hour vigil at Independence Square, ad-

jacent to the Parliament. We also understand that a second Soviet division has now entered Lithuania.

The situation is extremely tense, and this attempt by Moscow to crush democracy in the Baltic states must be met with the same firm resolve that we are taking in meeting similar attempts in other parts of the world.

President Landsbergis has appealed to the United States for protection and consideration of, and I quote, "true order, lawful justice, and genuine peace that may be restored to our oppressed country." This appeal mirrors another cry for help to the U.N., which resulted in the present confrontation in the Middle East.

The importance of our support for the Baltic states ought not and will not be minimized. A willingness by the United States and its allies to speak out is essential to the development of CSCE into a body which can respond to the challenges confronting Europe, first among which I would number the Soviet violations of Baltic independence.

We, of course, have other options before us to show the Soviet Union that such behavior will not be tolerated in the new world order we seek, which President Bush has described as, and I quote, "freer from the threat of terror, stronger in the pursuit of justice, and more secure in the quest for peace."

The Commission has suggested revoking the waiver of Jackson-Vanik, sending a high-level bipartisan delegation to the Baltics and meeting with the democratically elected Baltic leaders. Parenthetically, Mr. Secretary, I suggested the other day that perhaps the leaders of that delegation might well be President Reagan and President Carter.

In addition, the Commission has strongly urged using international fora, such as the Valletta meeting, which is now ongoing on the peaceful settlements of disputes, the United Nations, the upcoming CSCE meeting of senior officials, the body which will set the agenda, as you know, Mr. Secretary, for CSCE to raise forcefully the crisis in the Baltics and to seek solutions compatible with peaceful, democratic and united Europe which we all hailed two months ago in Paris at the Summit.

At this time I would like to ask the Co-Chairman of the Commission, who has led us so ably over the last two years and who has himself been one of the most articulate and able spokespersons for human rights and the implementation and honoring of the Helsinki Accords, Dennis DeConcini, senator from Arizona.

Co-Chairman DECONCINI. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much, and I want to acknowledge your leadership in moving so swiftly into this area that is easily forgotten today with what is going on in the Gulf.

And, Mr. Secretary, I want to thank you for being with us today to bring us up to date.

And I will ask that my full statement be put in the record. Because of time, I'm more interested in hearing the Secretary than myself.

I do think it is paramount that this Commission keep a focus in the area of human rights dealing with the Baltic states. It is something that we cannot afford to abandon, and I'm very fearful that

the world is abandoning the Baltic states and perhaps even our own government is doing so. And I hope that is not the case.

I think Gorbachev has very, very carefully orchestrated this to occur during this period of time. That government has been in on the planning and the strategic initiative by us in the Gulf at this time, in the Persian Gulf, with Desert Shield, and now Desert Storm. And I cannot help but think that this is the reason the activity has heightened and is continuing to heighten.

We need to bring political pressure to bear, in my opinion, and have the courage, as the President has had the courage to address Saddam Hussein in a most forceful way, to also address the Soviet threat and the actual use of aggression because that's what I think it's all about.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will put in the balance of my statement due to time.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Now I will recognize a former chairman and ranking member of the Senate side of the Commission, Senator D'Amato of New York.

Mr. D'AMATO. Mr. Chairman, let me first take this opportunity to commend you for not only taking the time, but understanding the necessity notwithstanding the events that are taking place today and that have galvanized all of our attention.

I dare say that there are many people in this room who got little sleep last evening, who went to bed very, very late, who got up very early, and who were glued to the events that were taking place, as we saw them transmitted, in the Middle East.

Mr. Chairman, when Mikhail Gorbachev won the Nobel Prize, there was talk of the new world order that you referred to. That talk has been obliterated by the brutal Soviet crackdown in Lithuania. And signs of further action will be taken against not only Lithuania, but Estonia and Latvia as well.

This is not just a political pothole on the road to freedom. It is a detour back to the repressive Stalinist tactics that led to 40 years of Cold War confrontations.

Fourteen Lithuanians are dead, shot or steamrolled by Soviet tanks. Many more will die unless they renounce freedom. It is no longer a question of tactics in dealing with the Soviet Union. It is now a question of fundamental principles.

On April 25, 1990, I warned my colleagues that Gorbymania was sweeping across our nation. I counseled that we should await action, not words to determine the real Soviet agenda.

That action has now been taken. And it is chilling, cold-blooded murder of those who stand for freedom and democracy. And these heinous actions have taken place while the world is distracted by the momentous events in the Middle East.

This is typical of what the Soviets did in 1956, when the Soviets used the cover of the Suez crisis to move into Hungary. And it's amazing how little things seem to have changed. In spite of Gorbachev's stirring rhetoric, Soviet actions when faced with the demand for freedom seem to have changed little in 35 years.

We cannot, should not, and must not remain silent while these actions place. And I command all of those who are here to remind the Soviets we will not allow the brutal murder of innocent civilians to go unnoticed.

I will cosponsor those resolutions and bills which will impose sanctions against the Soviets for their actions. I have already called upon President Bush to postpone the upcoming Summit.

But these worthy actions are not enough. At this crossroads, we are morally compelled to speak with a clear voice to the Soviets. I am introducing a resolution calling on our President to grant full diplomatic recognition to the democratically elected governments of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. Only by granting recognition to the embattled Baltic republics can we sent the message that must be sent.

It's time to raise our voices for freedom. It is time to cast our lot not with those who seek to extinguish the fire of freedom, but with those who are willing to die for it. We all hope for new world order, but it must be based on freedom and democracy, not terror and repression.

Mr. Chairman, I would hope that this is not going to be business as usual, that we are not going to get engaged in the politics of expedience, which today have created a situation that has necessitated our nation going to war.

Have we not embarked upon the politics of expedience that was advocated by our State Department? The enemy of my enemy is my friend. In those eight words, the expedience was demonstrated in the past 10 years when we sat back and watched Saddam Hussein build his military machine. We sat back while he used chemical weapons because, after all, it was against the enemy of my enemy. And, after all, didn't we want to curry favor with him?

If we sit back and practice those politics of expedience today as the people of Lithuania fight for freedom, we will sow the same kind of seeds that bring us ultimately to confront the Soviets, one way or the other, only it will be more difficult.

Now is the time, before they embark upon that course of death and destruction, to send them a clear signal. And I can't think of a better way than to give recognition to the independence of the Baltic nations with full diplomatic recognition, not this halfway, halfhearted, we recognize, we don't recognize, we recognize that they're not incorporated into the Soviet Union.

Do I expect the administration to move in that direction? Unfortunately, no, but I think they should. I think it's right, and I think only in that way do we let the Soviets understand how serious and purposeful we are.

Less than that is mere rhetoric.

Chairman HOYER. Senator Wallop? I'm going to call people by the times in which they came in.

Mr. WALLOP. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you very much for your prompt action in calling this hearing. The focus of this Commission must be real, and this action of yours has kept it that way. I hope that we continue to maintain this focus.

The sad fact remains that the Soviet Union continues to possess the most appalling capacity for evil, for its lying, its betraying, its dissembling, for cruelty, for distortion, and betrayals of their solemn commitments.

The sadder fact remains that the only thing that we in the West don't believe the Soviets when they tell it to us is the truth. Our

myopic tendency to find fulfillment of our dreams in the wishes of the day drives us to ignore reality.

These signals were clear, and we ignored them. Gorbachev signals his intention to use brute force to subdue the Baltics in plain speech after plain speech, without response from this country and without response from the West.

And, furthermore, he has demonstrated his cynical, cruel ability to act on those intentions in the past, long since the new era has arrived. In Baku, Azerbaijan, in Tbilisi, acts of Soviet government-sponsored brutality were ignored by the West and by the administration, while they now admit, at least, that some of their dream is shattering after the events in Lithuania and Latvia.

But I would have to ask the question if we have no shame as a nation that we can ignore the behavior of Gorbachev, his belligerent defense of the activities in Lithuania, his statement to Landsbergis, or his staff's statements to Landsbergis, that he couldn't speak to him while the rape of the nation was going on because he was having lunch.

And now our proven new partner in the alliance in the new world order is permitting a systematic violation of the embargo against Iraq because, and I quote, his "country needs the cash."

I quote you from the "Navy News" this morning. "The Soviet Union is flaunting the United Nations' embargo on Iraq and has continued to supply it with military equipment, ammunition, and spare parts.

"Sources for this information include the intelligence communities of the United States and Great Britain. War material is being lifted to a military airport near Baghdad.

"Sources say 12 flights of fully loaded AN-124, which is about the size of a C5-A, and/or AN-122 transports, are landing every day. Equipment that they're delivering is all types of ammunition and a complete number of front-line P-72 tanks and the construction material for bunkers.

"Gorbachev, say the sources, admitted to the airlift and offered the following explanation, 'The Soviets need the cash.'"

It's also true that the United States intercepted on the high seas a ship called the *Fermanov,* I think, bound for the Soviet Union with an illegal cargo unmanifested on board, and the cargo was spare parts for tanks, types of which do not exist in Jordan.

So here we have a nation that has not only systematically and comfortably and without apology been killing Lithuanians, but is providing the material to kill Americans, as well as those of the alliance that has taken place against Saddam Hussein.

The question is really: What does it take to burst a dream? What we have here today and that we know is that it must burst. The behavior reminiscent of the Soviet invasions of Hungary and Czechoslovakia and the rape of Poland is not new, and it cannot be hidden. It can only be ignored.

Will we ignore? Perhaps this hearing today will persuade those in power here and abroad that we will now commit America firmly on the side of the democratically elected governments of the Baltics and of Russia itself.

Gorbachev has shown he's no longer to be trusted. If he says he's no longer in charge, we have no means of determining who is. If he

is in charge, we have ample demonstration that he is not to be trusted.

And so what we know seems to me to be more important than what we wish, and to ignore reality is to abandon responsibility and with no plausible excuse.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you, Senator.

Congressman Wolf of Virginia?

Mr. WOLF. I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I usually don't make opening statements, but I wanted to make a couple of points. I think the administration and the State Department will really have to do a better job.

In today's New York Times, the articles points out how the Soviets said that most of the people who died in Lithuania died of heart attacks and traffic accidents. Now, if that just doesn't offend the State Department and get you so angry that you want to do something about it, I don't know what else should.

The second thing is if the New York Times is accurate, I think we missed an opportunity because it says the United States consulate in Leningrad sent a low-ranking representative to the funeral, and there were senior diplomats from the Moscow embassies of other countries, such as Sweden and Britain.

Why didn't we send a senior diplomat? Why didn't we send Ambassador Matlock? Why didn't we, from a symbolic point of view, send someone from a very, very high level.

Third, I sent a letter yesterday to Secretary Baker, and I know how busy you all are down there. On Tuesday CSCE voted and recommended that there be a delegation to go to the Soviet Union. I would like to request, and do it publicly right here, that you send a delegation headed by Max Kampelman and the Librarian of Congress, Jim Billington.

Jim Billington was under consideration to be ambassador to the Soviet Union before Mr. Matlock got it. He's fluent in Russian and understands the culture as well as any man in the United States.

Max Kampelman, with the work that he has done with this Commission in Helsinki, in Copenhagen, and other places, probably knows more and has forgotten more about it than most other people.

You ought to get them in an airplane with governmental officials, members of the Congress, private groups, and get over there right away, whereby we can send a signal to the freedom-loving people that care about democracy, not only in Lithuania and Latvia and Estonia, but, frankly, throughout that country, that we really care. But to send a low-level consulate officer when everyone else is sending high-level people is really an embarrassment.

The last comment is I think you have got to look at what are you going to do about MFN. You know, some of the same people said when Ceaucescu was bulldozing churches and bulldozing synagogues that we ought to continue to give him MFN because it's going to pacify him and make him more reasonable. We know it didn't work. You have got to look at what you're going to do on MFN. You have got to look at what you're going to do on credits with regard to business deals.

And you have also got to look at whether or not the Summit takes place. Should it be postponed? Can you go to the Summit? And I don't know the answer, but I think I do. Can you go to the Summit while there are still Soviet troops that have taken over there?

And the last thing is I think serious consideration ought to be given, whether it should happen or not, to maybe moving the Helsinki Conference, the human rights conference, which the Soviets asked for to be held in Moscow in this year. Maybe it should be moved from Moscow.

Maybe it should be in Poland, where they understand freedom, or maybe it should be in Czechoslovakia or maybe it should be in Hungary, some place like that.

But you really are going to have to do some very positive and very serious things and very, very fast or, else, I think, by our silence, the sound of silence is sending the message that, frankly, I don't believe that you agree with and I don't believe the Congress agrees with and I don't think the American people agree with.

Thank you for this opportunity.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you, Congressman.

Congressman Richardson?

Mr. RICHARDSON. Mr. Chairman, I will be brief because I think it's important we hear from Mr. Seitz.

I'm not going to take a back seat to anybody here about my concern about what is happening in the Baltic states. I think the Soviet Union's action has been inexcusable. I would have wished a stronger response on the part of the State Department.

However, Mr. Chairman, I think I may speak for many members of the Congress. I'm not ready to toss in the towel about Mr. Gorbachev. I am not ready to say that perestroika is down the tubes. I hope it isn't. I hope Mr. Gorbachev is still under control, he's still in control of the situation. It may be that he isn t.

There are a lot of issues at stake here. Human rights is paramount. The sovereignty of the Baltic states is a major focus of this Commission. We have got the situation in the Persian Gulf. We have got regional conflicts. We have got a Summit that is taking place in February, a lot of policy considerations.

And, Mr. Chairman, while I will, as I said, not take a back seat to the condemnation of this effort, I am not ready to say that Gorbachev is somebody who is comparable to Brezhnev and others. I am not ready to say that we should abandon our relationship with the Soviets.

Clearly, we have to make some things very clear. But, again, Mr. Chairman, I think it's important that we hear from the Department.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you.

And Mr. Ritter?

Mr. RITTER. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Today while our attention is focused on Iraq and Kuwait, the Baltic peoples bravely face the might of the Soviet military and the wrath of its secret police.

With the brutal crackdown on Lithuania and the possibility, the very real possibility, of its extension and its expansion, Congress and the administration must draw on all its strength and rise to

confront this equally ugly manifestation of naked aggression by the Soviets.

It is time for America and this administration to translate their words of support of Baltic peoples into concrete actions. I am suggesting a reassessment of U.S. policy towards the Soviet Union.

I am talking about a moratorium on all types of U.S. assistance on aid and trade credits to the Soviet Union, especially economic assistance. I am talking about a U.S. boycott of the Moscow CSCE human rights meeting.

I am talking about a sustained outcry that builds upon what Mrs. Andrei Sakharov, Yelena Bonner, has said, to remove from Mr. Gorbachev the honor of the Nobel Peace Prize. He has besmirched that honor by his actions.

Mr. Chairman, I will be working with other members of this House to devise a strategy to hold Mr. Gorbachev's feet to the fire when it comes to removal of the Nobel Peace Prize, to ask for an apology, and in the event it is not received, to go forward with an attempt to take away the Nobel Peace Prize or, at least, to influence the process.

It is now time to reassess our policy towards the Baltic states. Mr. Chairman, my colleagues, ladies and gentlemen, now is the time to recognize this flag as the real flag that is of importance in that part of the world, in Lithuania, not the hammer and sickle.

And I think building on that, we must reassess our relationships with the republics. The real political strength of the people in the Soviet Union is not in the Kremlin. It is in the republics. It is with people like Landsbergis and Boris Yeltsin. And we must pay far more attention to them as the real motive force for change, reform, and the future of that part of the world.

We can no longer excuse President Gorbachev by blaming the Soviet Baltic policy on renegade elements of the Soviet military or the old guard. Mr. Gorbachev has gone on record as saying that the crackdown this weekend was strictly an internal matter of the Soviet Union. We all know about the legalities of the relationship between the Soviet Union and the Baltic states.

Furthermore, he blames the Lithuanian people and their elected parliament for the Soviet military's violence. This is Stalinist rhetoric that upholds Stalinist action. It's similar to the rhetoric used in 1956 in Hungary and in 1968 in Czechoslovakia to justify the crackdowns there.

Now, I'm sympathetic with what the gentleman from New Mexico says. He hopes. We all hope. Everybody has been hoping. But the problem is that we have seen systematic denial of those hopes in the past several months.

It is not just what happened in the past few days, but it is all that has led up to the brutality and has culminated in violence. And it has been clear for some time that the Soviet strategy to crush the political aspirations of the Baltic peoples was much more clever and much more extensive and comprehensive than we in Congress are likely to be aware of.

We cannot easily see the stealthy actions of KGP, MVD, GRU in their covert war to provoke inter-ethnic violence so as to invite Moscow's military intervention. They did it in Baku. They did it in Tbilisi, as we have heard.

We can't easily see their covert war of economic, political, and personal intimidation and coercion. Indeed, what we have seen in Lithuania this past weekend is just the tip of a very large iceberg.

The administration has acted courageously to oppose the occupation and annexation of Kuwait by Saddam Hussein. Now Congress and the administration must begin to act and not just talk to stop the same international injustice in Lithuania and other Baltic nations.

The interesting revelations by the gentleman from Wyoming that AN-124s and AN-122s are resupplying the Iraqi military should cause great consternation in the halls of this administration. I would hope it does.

And at this time of crisis and war in the Gulf, let's just take a deep breath for strength, and let us act forthrightly and swiftly before more innocent blood is spilled in the Baltic nations.

And, as we pray for our service men and women now serving in the Persian Gulf, let us also pray for the brave people of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia.

Thank you very much.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you.

Now Senator Lautenberg from New Jersey.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. My compliments to you for holding these timely hearings.

We're all outraged by the repression, by the murder of innocent civilians by the Soviet military forces. This threat to peace and democratic government ought not to be overlooked because of our focus on the Persian Gulf crisis.

The killing of unarmed civilians in Vilnius, the untruthful official Soviet reporting of these events, the threats to other Baltic republics amount to a disappointing, dramatic reversal of a course of peaceful reform of the Soviet Union and improvements that we have seen in Soviet-American relations.

Mr. Chairman, when we read the official Soviet line on these developments, one thing is clear, and that is that the big lie is back in the Baltic. We're now receiving reports that the pro-Moscow communist elements are calling on the central Soviet government to dissolve the elected governments of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia and replace them with direct rule from Moscow.

President Gorbachev is unwilling to publicly accept disgrace, responsibility for deaths in Lithuania. Some say he was pressured to take these outrageous steps. And all of this raises serious questions that we have heard from colleagues around the table about Mr. Gorbachev's continued commitment to reform or to his ability to control the situation.

We, as congressional members of the Helsinki Commission, have a special responsibility to express the outrage of the American people to the Soviet assaults against the Baltic states.

Since their forced incorporation into the Soviet Union in 1940, never recognized by the United States, the Baltic peoples have aspired to regain their independence. And we want to help them. The threat to freedom and democratic government in the Baltic states requires a strong unequivocal response from our country.

And President Gorbachev cannot evade responsibility for the damning results in the Baltics of a Soviet policy of confrontation,

repression, violence. Nor should our government refrain from expressing our concern to Mr. Gorbachev. And these steps must not go unanswered.

Now, he knew. President Gorbachev knew that American credits, American cooperation, and American trade are not won solely by his personality or his charm. They're won by real concrete steps toward liberalization and reform. The Soviet Union has taken a giant step backwards, and they have to pay a price.

Yesterday the Senate took a stand and called upon the President to suspend the technical exchanges, to delay the provisions of MFN, and to consider the suspension of all economic benefits until the Soviet Union ends its assault on democratic government in the Baltic states.

I hope that we learn today that the administration will take a strong, affirmative stand on behalf of freedom and democracy in the Baltics. Our policy has to be clear.

It's got to be forceful at the upcoming meetings of the national experts on the Peaceful Settlements of Disputes in Valletta. And whether or not we have a Summit should depend on whether Mr. Gorbachev repairs the damage of the last few days.

And, once again, Mr. Chairman, I commend you for holding these hearings, and I hope we're going to get some answers today that will encourage us to believe that the United States will not stand still while this repression takes place.

Thank you.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you, Senator Lautenberg.

Secretary Seitz, I think it is evident to you the concern that the members of Congress share with respect to the situation in the Baltic states. Fully half of the members, congressional members, of the Commission are here and have spoken. I don't apologize, but you had to wait an unusually long time to get your shot at testifying.

I want to thank you for being here. This hearing was scheduled on very short notice. I talked to Secretary Eagleburger last evening, and he himself, I know, would have liked to have been here, but, clearly, the rush of events precluded that. But you, of course, have this as your particular area of responsibility.

We are pleased to have somebody of your breadth of background. I'm not going to go through your biography. Suffice it to say that you have obviously been assigned to many areas of the world and have an extensive experience in the foreign service, which you began in 1966.

We do appreciate very much your being with us and that the administration, focused as it is, as we all are, as the world is, on the Middle East, felt it important to make sure that we had a high-level representative testifying here with respect to the current situation in the Baltic states and the administration's view of that and to the extent that you can relate to us the administration's plans at this point. So let me now recognize you.

And, Mr. Markey, I will recognize you if you want to make a statement. We now have more than half of the congressional members, which is extraordinary in light of the fact that the House is not in session except in pro forma sessions. Congressman Markey?

Mr. MARKEY. Thank you, Steny, and thank you, Senator DeConcini, as well, for your typically timely calling of this hearing. I very much appreciate it.

Yesterday the United States and its allies launched one of the largest military attacks in the history of the world. While we focused on the extraordinary events in the Gulf, the Soviet Union appears to be slipping back into old habits of repression in the Baltics. The deaths in Lithuania this weekend were tragic and unnecessary.

Just how much is at stake for the world in the current Soviet reversal is clear as we remember back to the beginnings of the Persian Gulf crisis last year. Imagine how fundamentally different the situation would have been without the diplomatic support of the Soviet Union.

There is much at stake for the world in Vilnius. What was largely a political dispute over the terms of independence, whether the Baltics could succeed in months or whether it would take years has become a much more fundamental question of the future of the Soviet Union.

Last year it appeared as if a political compromise would be possible. It was fiery rhetoric, but no killing. But with the horrifying military attack on peaceful protesters in Vilnius on Sunday, a rubicon has now been crossed. Fifteen people lost their lives, and the struggle has become bloody. A decision to use force has been made.

Gorbachev expressed no regret for the brutal crackdown. In fact, he seems to be sanctioning a continuation of the crackdown. I am extremely concerned that the Soviet Union may be retreating from the path of liberalization.

The specter of dictatorship raised by Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze is a frightening prospect. Could this crackdown portend such a shift toward dictatorship?

Particularly disturbing are the latest reports of press censorship. The passage of laws guaranteeing freedom of the press in the Soviet Union was heralded as a significant step on the road to reform and democratization. The fact that President Gorbachev now sees press freedom as expendable undermines the future of perestroika and glasnost.

As the democratically elected government of Lithuania barricades itself behind concrete blocks, one must ask: What will it mean for reform in the Soviet Union if these parliaments are overthrown? Can the Soviets return to the path of progress and reform or will there be a new period of repression?

We must urge the Soviets in the strongest possible terms to return to the path of democratization initiated by President Gorbachev.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you, Mr. Markey.

Mr. Secretary, you may have drawn all 18 members of the Commission if we keep you waiting there much longer. Another member of the Commission has arrived. I'd like to recognize him, John Porter of Illinois, who is also the Co-Chairman of the Human Rights Caucus.

Congressman Porter?

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Chairman, thank you. I will not take a long time for a statement, but let me say that, as I did yesterday at the

hearing of the congressional Human Rights Caucus that we held, that Mikhail Gorbachev should not assume that the United States is totally preoccupied in the Middle East, that we are just as concerned as we were a few days, a few weeks, a few months ago about the situation in the Baltic states.

And, Mr. Chairman, I am urging the Foreign Affairs Committee in the House to bring to the floor tomorrow a resolution expressing our condemnation of the action of the Soviet troops in Vilnius.

And I am hopeful that we can convince the committee to do that and consider both resolutions tomorrow and send a message to the Soviet Union of our condemnation and concern about the situation in Lithuania.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you, Mr. Porter.

Now, Mr. Secretary, we'll be pleased to hear from you, sir.

STATEMENT OF RAYMOND G.H. SEITZ, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EUROPEAN AND CANADIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. SEITZ. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think this is from the point of view of the administration also a timely gathering. I know it is difficult for all of you, as it is in the administration, to find the time on this particularly critical day, but I think just the fact of this meeting is important, and I think it will receive attention in the way that it should. So I am glad that this has happened. I have heard and followed very carefully what has been said here.

I have a statement that I would like to read, and I would like to read it because I think it addresses two of the concerns that have emerged here. One is, what is the nature of what has gone on in the Baltics? The second is, how is the administration dealing, particularly within CSCE, which I know is of paramount concern to you, in this situation?

The President and Secretary Baker have made clear that the United States condemns the use of force and intimidation by the Soviet government against the freely elected governments of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia and the citizens of those states.

We are outraged by the killing of unarmed civilians in Vilnius by Soviet military units on January 13. We hold the Soviet leadership responsible for the actions of the Soviet military.

The President's reaction on hearing of these events was unequivocal. There is no justification, he said, for the use of force against peaceful and democratically elected governments.

By their actions, the Soviets have violated their commitments under CSCE to respect the will of the people expressed in democratic elections. These violent actions violate the spirit and content of the CSCE charter of Paris signed by Soviet President Gorbachev scarcely two months ago. The Soviet actions run directly counter to the reforms the Soviet government has built itself, has itself sought to implement over the last several years since these reforms are based crucially on the rule of law.

The President and Secretary Baker have consistently emphasized that the United States has never recognized the forcible annexation of the Baltic states by the Soviet Union. To quote the Secretary, "We support and will continue to support the aspirations of the Baltic peoples to determine their own future."

We thus view Soviet actions in the Baltic states with abhorrence. They are an attempt to suppress democratic development and to prevent the Baltic peoples from choosing their own destinies. They are a serious mistake for the Soviet Union itself and the democratization Gorbachev has sought to foster, as well as for the Soviet Union's relations with the United States and many other countries in North America, Western, Central, Eastern Europe, and elsewhere.

The President is following events in the Baltic states closely. As he said on January 13, the Soviet program of democratic change has provided the basis for the significant improvement in relations between the United States and the Soviet Union in the past few years.

Increasing cooperation between the United States and the Soviet Union is a vital factor for stability and peace, and it is in the interest of people everywhere that this cooperation continue.

However, if the Soviet Union turns back from the path of democratization and peaceful change, this can only damage the relationship between our two countries.

As Secretary Baker observed on January 13, enduring U.S.-Soviet cooperation, indeed, partnership, depends on continued reform, for partnership is impossible in the absence of shared values.

We have communicated to the Soviets our abhorrence of the use of force and intimidation and our strong view that peaceful dialogue with the legitimate representatives of the Baltic peoples is the only way to resolve this crisis.

The President has spoken to President Gorbachev on the subject. On January 13, Ambassador Matlock expressed our condemnation of Soviet actions to Deputy Foreign Minister Pavlov. He reiterated that the United States does not recognize the forcible annexation of the Baltic states.

Secretary Baker wrote and spoke to former Foreign Minister Shevardnadze last week on the Baltics.

On returning from his trip to the Middle East, he called in the Soviet Charge d'affaires to convey our strong protest over Soviet actions in the Baltics. He delivered the same message through a phone call to the new Soviet Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh on that same day.

We are in contact with the Baltic representatives virtually on an hourly basis. This week I received a delegation of Baltic diplomats. And both the State Department counselor Robert Zelnick and I met with a member of the Estonian government, as did the National Security Council staff.

The Latvian Deputy Prime Minister and one of the Vice Presidents of the Presidium of the Supreme Council of Lithuania are arriving in Washington tonight. They will be received here at a high level.

The Baltic states are turning to us and to the Western allies for support in their efforts to continue to build democracy and to defend the gains for which they have struggled so long and paid so dearly.

While condemning the actions of the Soviet authorities in the Baltics, we must keep in mind that genuine democratic movements

and nascent democratic institutions have been forming in the Soviet Union for some time.

The continuation of these positive developments is of vital importance to the people of the Soviet Union and to democracy in the Baltic states. We, too, have a stake in it, for it is the basis of continued growth of cooperation between the United States and the Soviet government.

While considering the measures we might have to take in response to Soviet actions in the Baltics, we must continue to encourage the Soviet authorities to return to the path of democratic reform and give our support to those who are working for democratization in the Soviet Union.

Mr. Chairman, the common international response rejecting the Soviet actions in the Baltic states has been swift, forceful, and unprecedented. This is an issue for the international community because it involves the basic standards of behavior.

If we are to have an effect on the Soviet leaders, we must present a unified front so they understand that continuing down the path of violence and repression will disrupt relations with the West and with governments around the world.

We are working multilaterally with our NATO allies, with the European community, and with the CSCE governments now meeting in Valletta. Our aims are to support the Baltics and to make clear to the Soviets the risk they run by engaging in this unacceptable behavior.

For example, the North Atlantic Council statement of January 14 appeals to the Soviets to honor their CSCE commitments and notes the negative consequences that the continued use of force by the Soviets in the Baltics could have for relations between the allies and the Soviet Union.

The European community has made clear that the use of force in Lithuania is unacceptable and inconsistent with the fundamental principles of the CSCE process and has linked continuing cooperation between the community and the Soviet Union with an end to the use of violence and intimidation by Soviet forces in the Baltic states.

The Council of Europe has reacted strongly to developments in the Baltics and has indicated that the Soviet Union's special status vis-a-vis the Council of Europe Assembly is at risk.

Eastern European states have also rejected the Soviet Union's behavior, and we are in touch with them as well.

And, of course, the President stated last Sundry that these events threaten to set back or reverse reform, and this could not help but affect our relationship.

Importantly, for this Commission, we are also actively consulting with other CSCE signatories in order to determine what the next steps will be in our response to Soviet actions there.

Given the Soviet's commitments to the Helsinki Final Act and subsequent CSCE documents, commitments to which the Soviets freely subscribed, the CSCE community also has an obligation to demand a halt to these actions.

Yesterday in his opening statement at the Valletta meeting of experts on the peaceful settlement of disputes, our head of delegation lodged a strong condemnation of Soviet actions, noting that

these actions also run counter to the entire CSCE process and the spirit of the Valletta meeting.

We and others are sponsoring Baltic NGOs into the Valletta sessions and will work with other participants to seek access for other Baltic representatives, should they attend.

We also supported the Austrian call for a special meeting of the CSCE to address Soviet actions in the Baltics. Today in Vienna the Soviets refused to agree to such a special meeting.

During the ensuing discussion, however, the U.S. delegation and others stressed the unacceptability of Soviet repression and the need for a prompt restoration of rights to the Baltic peoples and their freely elected governments.

Moreover, we are presently consulting with our allies on the invocation of the human dimension mechanism. We believe the use of this instrument can drive home to the Soviet authorities that the actions in the Baltics are a fundamental contradiction of all that CSCE stands for and promises.

In addition, the whole range of programs of cooperation with the Soviet Union is under review, including programs in the commercial and financial areas.

As for the February Summit, you have seen the statement of the White House spokesman that it is up in the air.

Mr. Chairman, in presenting to you our assessment of events in the Baltic states, I have emphasized our consultations with other governments, particularly through the CSCE process, in pressing the Soviets to engage in peaceful dialogue with the legitimate representatives of the Baltic peoples.

As the President observed, legitimacy is not built by force. It is earned by the consensus of the people and by the protection of human and political rights.

It would be tragic if the difficult, but very real, progress towards democratization that has been achieved in the Soviet Union in the past few years were to be undone by an ill-considered return to the methods of a police state.

It would be tragic for the Baltic peoples, who, as the President said, have acted with dignity and restraint, and it would be wrong for the population of the Soviet Union for it would signal a return to the old thinking of repression by authorities there. We ask the Soviet authorities to undo what has been done.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you, Mr. Secretary, for that excellent statement.

I think we're now up to 14 of the 18. Mr. Smith has just gotten in. And before I start asking questions, I would yield to Mr. Smith for whatever statement he would like to make.

Mr. SMITH. Mr. Chairman, thank you for the swiftness with which you and Mr. DeConcini have scheduled this hearing. It's very important that we send with a very loud voice our utter outrage over what has happened in the Baltic and, particularly, in Lithuania and Latvia. Indeed, this hearing highlights the bipartisan concern for the situation there, and the need to address the Soviet government in a new light. Thank you for scheduling this extremely important and timely hearing.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you. Mr. Secretary, as I said, I thought your statement was excellent. And, obviously, it didn't mince any words. It adopted the premise that we have had in this country since the 1940s, that the incorporation of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, as a result of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, was illegal. And, in fact, as I said on the floor last year the Congress of U.S.S.R. People's Deputies concluded that as well, observed that it was an invalid incorporation.

I would like to know—you may not be able to outline it now, but what are the specific steps we are taking outside of the context of this violation, we believe, of the U.N. charter and the Helsinki Final Act and subsequent documents, particularly the charter of Paris and the Vienna document? What concrete steps are we taking as a nation to recognize the independent status of those three Baltic nations?

Mr. SEITZ. Well, I think, Congressman, certainly, the reiteration at the very highest levels of our view about the non-incorporation of those states into the Soviet Union, the reiteration of that, is an important element of what you have just referred to.

We have had a variety of contacts with Baltic authorities that I referred to in my statement. There are numerous others. We have officers now in each one of the Baltic states, who are there for, I think, very obvious reasons.

I think the manner in which we have approached, particularly in CSCE, the question of the Baltic states is an indication that the status of those three states is special. It is unfinished business in Europe.

And, although last year we went through, I think, a rather exhilarating time in Europe with Soviet withdrawal and with changes in governments in Eastern Europe and the unification of Germany, these were major events in European history. And, yet, there is unfinished business.

And I think while we will continue the actions that we have taken, I think it really is very much in CSCE, really, that you underscore that this business is not as yet complete.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you. Mr. Secretary, let me pursue that, and then I'm going to stop. I've got a lot of questions, but all of the members do. And I'm going to ask each member to ask one question. And then if we have time for a second round, we'll do a second round.

Is there any thought, either at Valletta, which may not be possible at this point in time—but, as you know, at the Paris meeting, Albania was granted observer status.

We had discussed the possibility and propriety and suggested that the United States propose observer status for the Baltic states at the most recent Paris meeting two months ago. That was not pressed by the United States, presumably on the theory that it would be vetoed by the Soviet Union. And, obviously, the process is a consensus process, not a majority vote process. We understand that.

But has there been any consideration of suggesting observer status in Valletta or subsequent meetings of the CSCE for the free Baltic states?

Mr. SEITZ. Yes.

Chairman HOYER. And no conclusion has been reached, but it has been under——

Mr. SEITZ. No. In keeping with how one has to do business in the CSCE, this is something that we have to discuss with other governments. But the answer is yes.

Chairman HOYER. Senator DeConcini?

Co-Chairman DECONCINI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Seitz, just today we're informed that 90 trucks and 3,000 special forces entered Vilnius, and that leaves two full divisions in Lithuania and one in Latvia.

It occurs to me that, though your statement is—and I applaud it or some of the things you have said that have been expressed to the Soviets and Mr. Gorbachev during direct conversations with the President.

Doesn't this indicate to you a pretty direct answer, that "It's none of your business" or "We're not going to pay attention to it"? And if so, it seems to me that you're on the threshold here of a great opportunity, having the President and the dignitaries coming here, the Vice Presidents of Lithuania and Latvia being here this week, that it would be perhaps even more than symbolic if President Bush could be convinced by the State Department recommendation to meet with them and give them some expression of solidarity from the chief executive of this country.

You have said that it is going to be of a high nature who they are to meet with and discuss things with. Is that a consideration? And should we be optimistic that maybe the State Department and the White House will conclude that now is the time to kind of pull the gloves off when we have just seen this military force increase substantially?

Mr. SEITZ. I think you point to yet another sign of intimidation in Lithuania, although there are similar developments in the other two states as well, and that is the pattern of intimidation.

The numbers I have heard are, in fact, even higher than the ones you described, although I do not believe the new troops are actually deployed in the center of Vilnius. Nonetheless, the very act of their introduction, as you point out, is another element of intimidation.

As to——

Co-Chairman DECONCINI. let me interrupt you just a minute. Do you consider it also more than an element of intimidation, but perhaps some response to President Bush's discussion with Mr. Gorbachev without any re-response, assuming there hasn't been any, sending more troops in there? Does that figure into your analysis?

Mr. SEITZ. I can't necessarily connect the two.

Co-Chairman DECONCINI. Okay.

Mr. SEITZ. But it would be obvious that whoever has made those decisions is prepared to run the risks that I outlined.

Co-Chairman DECONCINI. Go ahead.

Mr. SEITZ. As to the level of reception for our two visitors who will be arriving this evening, you will appreciate that it's extremely difficult for me to say how the very top leadership in the government will be available, for obvious reasons.

Co-Chairman DECONCINI. Can you express your own view or the view of the State Department? Do you think it's worthy of a president?

Mr. SEITZ. I think it's worthy of a very high level and public meeting, but at the moment I really can't say how that would happen.

Co-Chairman DECONCINI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman HOYER. Mr. Wolf?

Mr. WOLF. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, thank you. Since we just get one question, let me tell you my concern and then ask you the question. I'm concerned that with the type of people that are now being put into office, such as Boris Pavlov and people like that, that they don't have the experience that some of the other ones had with regard to dealing with the United States. And, therefore, it will be important that they see how interested we are.

And the second thing is that I think with the sending of a low-level official, although it might be a very nice person,—I'm not criticizing the person who went to the funeral, obviously—we don't seem to be really as effective from a public point of view of showing how deeply we care.

Would it not be appropriate for the administration to send people that you have a lot of confidence in who would go and talk to the different people and come back and report back to the administration and to Congress?

It's twofold. One, they could come back and report; but, secondly, they would be able to send a message of how we feel.

So what are your thoughts with regard to a high-level delegation with perhaps Mr. Kampelman or somebody like that going over quickly?

Mr. SEITZ. This is, indeed, one of the ideas that we now have under consideration, exactly how to project a more obvious American presence in the Baltic states.

There are a variety of ways that we think that we could do this, but until we have decided that, I don't want to go any further. But I certainly hear your message.

I wouldn't be myself really too dismissive of the level of American representation in those three republics. I think it's very important that we have someone in each one of those republics and that the person is not from Moscow, is not representing or appearing to represent a concern from the capital of the Soviet Union, but, rather, is one step separate of that.

We also have American citizens in each one of those republics. And there are consular responsibilities. You recall last spring we were unable to continue to have American officials in the three republics. I think it is important that we do have them there now and that they will continue to be there and that they are prominent in going about the respective capitals.

But it may not be enough, and I think we should add to this, and I think we will.

Mr. WOLF. I have no more questions. Just a closing comment is I think the higher level of the delegation that we send to both Moscow and also to the Baltic states may help not only with regard to the problem in Lithuania, but those people may be able to send

such a message that keeps the Soviet government from moving into other areas and keeping what has happened there from happening in some other places.

I thank you very much for your time, Mr. Secretary.

Mr. SEITZ. I get the point, Congressman.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you, Mr. Wolf.

Mr. Ritter?

Mr. RITTER. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

And I want to thank you, Mr. Seitz, for some excellent testimony, particularly where you state that the whole range of cooperation with the Soviet Union is under review, including programs in the commercial and financial areas, because that seems that that may be the only clout that we have at this stage. There is a great deal of cynicism on the rise over there.

But I wanted to ask my question about just who we're dealing with over there and whether or not we're dealing with the right people.

At the Human Rights Caucus briefing yesterday, Sovietologist Dmitri Simes, said that he has it on good authority that Foreign Minister Shevardnadze and Politboro Member Yakovlev advised Gorbachev to declare the Baltic occupation a last vestige of Stalinism and to seriously negotiate to return their independence.

And then on January 13th, President Bush said that the administration, quote, "would redouble its efforts to strengthen and encourage peaceful change in the Soviet Union," unquote.

I guess my question is: With whom at this stage do we redouble our efforts? And is it feasible to start significant efforts with those individuals who represent 10s, 20s, 30s, 40s, literally 100 million people plus if you start talking about not just the Baltics, but Boris Yeltsin?

I mean, are we going to pay some greater attention to Baltic leadership now that Mr. Gorbachev has shown himself to be rather insensitive on things that are so important to us? And will we begin to perhaps negotiate with these individuals, with Mr. Yeltsin, before it's too late?

Mr. SEITZ. I think you raise a very important consideration, and it is what makes this situation different from some of the previous situations that we have faced: reaction in 1956, for example,—a couple of people have mentioned that—but also reaction after the invasion of Afghanistan, reaction after the shoot-down of the Korean airliner.

There are just these bench marks in our relationship with the Soviet history, and there are elements of this that are very familiar to all of us and very disappointing.

But there is something different here, and that is that there are these democratic forces. Some of them are represented in town government. Some of them are represented in nationalist movements in the various republics of the Soviet Union and, above all, the democratic forces in the three Baltic states.

Now, that, the domestic element of what is happening in the Soviet Union, is something that makes this particular crisis different from the ones that have preceded it.

Therefore, your point, Congressman, is, I take it, that we have to do with we can, either through contacts or the various programs

that we have, or decide to withdraw, reinforce those elements inasmuch as those elements will be the success of the democratic elements or that it will be one of the elements which will ultimately lead to the success of the Baltic states acquiring their independence.

Mr. RITTER. Can we do that? I guess.

Mr. SEITZ. Well, we're trying. I mean, this is the great drama of what's going on in the Soviet Union now.

Mr. RITTER. It seems to me that if Mr. Yeltsin can negotiate with Mr. Gorbachev, we should be able to negotiate with Mr. Yeltsin.

Mr. SEITZ. Oh, we see Mr. Yeltsin. I mean, our ambassador saw Mr. Yeltsin three or four days ago.

Mr. RITTER. That was for food aid and the economic. The food assistance went through. Wouldn't that have been a good time to talk more with the democratically elected elements, their power structure?

Mr. SEITZ. Congressman?

Mr. RITTER. Yes?

Mr. SEITZ. Part of the food assistance program and, in fact, the medical assistant program take exactly your point, that is that we would need to be assured that that food and medical assistance was distributed by essentially private, voluntary organizations to the places of greatest need and, particularly, in the republics and not through the central authorities.

Mr. RITTER. Has that been happening?

Mr. SEITZ. Well, we haven't put the program into effect yet. It's only just been decided. But that is an example of one of the decisions that you have to make. Do you go forward with that because, arguably, it can reinforce some of the democratic elements there, or do you simply suspend it with other programs?

Mr. RITTER. Critical is that we are aware of exactly where it goes and to whom it goes.

Mr. SEITZ. Exactly right. Exactly right.

Mr. RITTER. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. I thank the gentleman, thank him for his leadership in calling this hearing, took, at such a critical time.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you.

Senator Lautenberg?

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Yes. Mr. Chairman, in keeping with the policy put forward, I would like to ask a question and then submit others to Mr Seitz.

What's the administration's view on MFN, on trade credits, on technical exchanges, and the upcoming Summit? What's the present perspective from the administration's vantage point?

Mr. SEITZ. Those are, I would say, two separate issues, one, the Summit. I think it's been clear from what has been said from the White House that whether the Summit takes place now is a matter of some doubt.

This is ultimately the decision for the President, but I think it has been suggested that what is occurring in the Baltic states is something that affects our attitude to a summit.

On the financial package; that is, particularly, most favored nation status and CCC credits, Exim credits, those embody an effort to move towards a normal relationship with the Soviet

Union. They are a series of steps that distinguish the kind of relationship we would like to have with the Soviet Union as opposed to the one that we have had with the Soviet Union for so very long.

They are premised on the fact that the Soviet Union is in the process of reform, moving to a market economy, democratization, perestroika, glasnost, all of these things that have charmed us over the last several years.

If that is a false premise, if what we are seeing, in fact, turns out to be a cold false dawn in the Soviet Union, I don't see how we can move forward with that kind of normal decision. We want to normalize with a democratic Soviet Union which permits democracy to happen within its boundaries. There's no point in trying to seek normalization with a Soviet Union that is antithetical to all that, among other things, CSCE stands for.

So that is, I think, the cusp where we are now and which is so dramatically presented by what is going on in the Baltic countries.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you, Senator Lautenberg, Mr. Wolf.

Who is next? I guess Mr. Markey was next.

Mr. MARKEY. If I could, I'd just like to pursue a little further what Senator Lautenberg raised and just deal with the specific treaties that are potentially or agreements that are potentially going to be before the United States Senate this year: the Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty, which reduces very significantly the tanks and armor and artillery in Europe and disproportionately affects the Soviet force; Strategic Arms Reduction Talks, which is going to reduce by one-third the nuclear strategic capability of both the sides; the Chemical Weapons Agreement, which is going to cut stockpiles by 80 percent over the next 10 years in the United States and Soviet Union; and the ongoing, but potentially still ripe, short-range nuclear force treaties, in which talks are planned for the spring and perhaps a treaty could be ready later on this year in consideration in the Senate; and throw in, as well, the incredible historic development of hundreds of thousands of Jewish emigres going into Israel and other parts of the world.

These are all major developments and, clearly, have to be weighed as well in terms of the relationship that we have with the Soviet Union in the further encouragement of them, notwithstanding the progress that they may or may not be making in democratization at a rate that may satisfy all.

How do you mediate the tension between those somewhat contradictory goals that could be achieved in the short term while waiting for other longer-term trends to fully develop?

Mr. SEITZ. I think, Congressman, by attempting to distinguish between those areas where we seek a normalization of our relationship with the Soviet Union based on democratic reform and those areas where our straightforward national interest is involved.

The judgment as to whether CFE or START is good for our security is a judgment that we should make, I think, essentially divorced from political developments inside the Soviet Union.

Mr. MARKEY. Are you going to weigh whether or not they divorce our reaction from their own linkage of the issue?

Mr. SEITZ. I'm sorry. Would you say that again?

Mr. MARKEY. In other words, as you divorce these issues, will the Soviets, as well, divorce them in terms of their willingness to nego-

tiate or finalize treaties in the areas that I referred to and continue the Jewish emigration trend, which we all very much support and want to see continued?

Mr. SEITZ. Yes. I would expect so, though I think you point to a particularly interesting barometer. If the forces of reaction are on the rise in the Soviet Union, if they are—and there is disconcerting evidence that that may, indeed, be the case. If they are, then they may conclude that these very positive developments that you have outlined, both in arms control and emigration, are associated with an approach to government that they wish to discard.

If the forces of reaction reject the CFE Treaty, I think we will be looking at a real failure in general security in Europe and be returning to a very ominous time.

You can also, I think, over the years almost chart the success of emigration from the Soviet Union on the basis of the degree to which relations with the United States or the West are reasonably prosperous.

If the forces of reaction are on the rise, I think the whole question of open and liberal emigration will again come under question within the Soviet Union. And I think that would be a terrible development.

Mr. MARKEY. I agree with your analysis. And, therefore, I would suggest that we seriously consider whether it is in our best interest and their best interest to postpone the Summit in February——

Mr. SEITZ. Right.

Mr. MARKEY. [continuing]. Because we see the historic linkage which does exist between progress in human rights tied to international arms control agreements that auger for more security for both countries.

Mr. SEITZ. These judgments are, obviously, extremely difficult for the President.

Mr. MARKEY. I understand.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you, Congressman Markey.

Congressman Porter?

Mr. PORTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Seitz, I don't know how you were using the "if" in the "If the forces of reaction are on the rise," but in our hearing before the congressional Human Rights Caucus yesterday, we had three experts on the Soviet Union: Roseanne Ridgeway; Peter Reddaway; and Dr. Simes, who has been mentioned here. All of them seemed to be pretty well convinced that that was the case and has been for some time now.

I think, frankly, that this is a time for the United States to take action. Your statement is a very, very fine statement. The President's words have been tough. Secretary Baker's have been tough. But it seems to me that that message is not going to get through to the Soviet Union without doing some specific things.

A number have been mentioned here today. Let me run through kind of a litany. And then if you could pick out what you think is the most promising avenue of action to send a message to the Soviet Union and to effect change in their policy, let me know.

We talked about the delay in the Summit. We talked about perhaps a U.N. resolution that they might be forced to veto. We could talk about cultural exchanges.

We could talk about putting our aid programs conditional, on being administered solely by the republics or perhaps only in the Baltic states. We could talk about delaying the September Moscow human rights meeting of CSCE.

We could talk about retracting the waiver of Jackson-Vanik. We could talk about withdrawing food aid and technical assistance. We could talk with them about their anxiousness to become a member of the IMF and the World Bank.

What options do you think are good ones to send them the kind of message through action on our part that will effectuate some change and put some pressure on the situation rather than just condemnations and words?

Mr. SEITZ. Well, let me say, Congressman, as I did, when you say on Jackson-Vanik retraction, I assume you mean CCC credits, Exim, that whole package.

Well, I mean, I think if you did all of them, it would have quite an effort.

Mr. PORTER. In other words, you think we would have some good leverage there.

Mr. SEITZ. I think steps such as this. You mentioned the U.N. I'm surprised, actually, you don't mention more on the CSCE side because I do think there is a lot of altitude in CSCE and that it's very important that we have other governments joining us in doing this and that it not be just sort of a strictly American action.

But, in any event, all of these obviously would have an effect on the Soviet leadership. Whether it would have an effect that would cause them to reassess the wisdom of the course that they have embarked on in the Baltics, I'm less certain, or whether it would have the effect of them saying, "Well, the hell with it. Here's the fickle West again. And, clearly, you can't rely on them. And, therefore, we're free to do whatever we want to in the Baltics."

That's part of the problem in going through something like that.

Mr. PORTER. Our own Chairman, in his remarks on the floor when all of this happened, pointed out that the Congress of the People's Deputies, I think it is, themselves have said that the Baltics is an entirely different situation——

Mr. SEITZ. Yes.

Mr. PORTER [continuing]. That they are historically unjustified and invalid—I think they used the word "invalid"—that they are republics forced to be part of the Soviet Union.

It seems to me that some actions taken by the United States at this point in time and, hopefully, with our allies in the CSCE could perhaps get them to change their policy and recognize these republics as different from all of the other republics and ultimately gain their independence, as they should have it.

And I think we have at this point in time maximum leverage. And if we can send a message that we are not just occupied with the Middle East, that we intend to not allow this to pass at this time,—I think it's essential that we send that message to the Soviet Union in the most forceful way—I think we could perhaps

effectuate what we have all worked for from the very beginning, and that is the independence of these states.

Mr. SEITZ. These steps that you have outlined more or less are all under review, as I said before, and they're going to have to be a decision taken by the President. And he would have to select the timing.

Clearly, our hope is that there is some space here for a reversal of what has happened in the Baltics, some more favorable sign.

Chairman HOYER. Mr. Smith?

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Seitz, welcome to the Commission. I think it goes without saying that there are very deep suspicions, I think, shared by everyone, including the administration, about the timing of the move by the Soviets in Lithuania.

It would appear that the military actions, coupled with the political underpinnings—the National Salvation Committee—would indicate that this is part of a plan, perhaps a comprehensive plan, which has been embarked upon.

I think if we look in another part of the world, in China, we recognize the same kinds of actions. Severe sentences were handed down against the pro-democracy individuals were meted out right as we're nearing the deadline in the Gulf, when all eyes are riveted on Baghdad.

I have a couple of questions, all in one: The military has moved, unfortunately, with tragic results. Could you tell us more about the National Salvation Committee and about what might be the facsimile of that committee in the other republics?

Are we seeing a model established here of a front group which then becomes a puppet organization, owing its entire allegiance to Moscow? The names of some of these people, do we fear them?

And, what is the probability of a midnight imposition of a government, perhaps headed by Jarmalavicius or someone else? He's one whom I've been led to believe is a leader in the National Salvation Committee. Who is he and some of these other individuals?

What fears do we have this government will materialize overnight and the other government would be deposed?

Mr. SEITZ. Knowing the tricky course of democracy and reform in the Soviet Union and looking at political developments in the Soviet Union, particularly over the last two or three months, it is not a shock to see this effort at repression in the Baltic states.

What I find personally somewhat surprising is that it should be in such classic trappings that it should be almost textbook in its implementation. And one of the manifestations, certainly one of the manifestations, is the creation of these national salvation committees. They didn't exist a week ago.

I don't know if you could find anybody, certainly in Moscow, who knew who was on them or what they represented. They seem to be figments of political convenience and I doubt they represent anything more than that.

Mr. SMITH. Are there individuals we have identified who could compromise a new government if that were to be imposed?

Mr. SEITZ. I'm sure there are. I know we now know the names of some people who theoretically are part of this. But this is just a personal impression: I think it's a sham, just a sham.

Mr. SMITH. I was going to say there seem to be some striking similarities, at least to what happened in Romania. Although the military situation was completely different, suddenly a Salvation Front government, a turnkey operation, was ready to take over.

In this case, we're just hoping that that's not going to be the case in Lithuania.

Mr. SEITZ. My own impression is that these committees, or one of them, I think, is now proclaiming themselves an alternative government, don't even represent as much as the salvation front in Romania did. I mean, I think it's that much of a figment.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you.

Mr. Cardin is not a member of the Commission, but is our faithful attendee and participant and committed individual.

Representative Cardin, if you have a question you would like to propound to Secretary Seitz, we would certainly let you do that.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Chairman, I want thank you for holding this meeting and thank you for inviting me to participate.

Mr. Secretary, I want to thank you for your statement and the administration's support for these issues, particularly in these times when we could be distracted. And I think the administration has been rather strong in calling for change with the Soviet's attitude towards the Baltic states.

I also share with you your thoughts about the economic package and the fact that our progress on the economic front with the Soviets is very much contingent upon the democratic reforms that have taken place and that there is a backtracking or offtrack with what's happening, that we must reconsider our economic position with the Soviet Union.

I want to follow up about the CSCE process. As you pointed out and I agree, there is opportunity here for CSCE to take certain steps as it relates to the Soviet Union and the Baltic states.

I noticed that in your statement, you mentioned the Austrians putting forward a recommendation for a meeting that was rejected by the Soviets. We have a human rights meeting that is scheduled in Moscow.

I am wondering whether you have any recommendations on how the CSCE process could be better utilized to try to help bring about a successful conclusion to what is happening within the Baltics.

Chairman HOYER. Mr. Secretary, before you answer that, I have a question as well that relates to that. You may answer it at the same time. You will be, I believe, representing the United States in the senior officials' meeting that is coming up, I believe, later this month within the CSCE process, this new sort of high-level regularized meeting of high-level officials within the CSCE process.

This is a new event out of Paris, and perhaps you could reflect upon what you intend to be doing at that meeting in the context of Congressman Cardin's question.

Mr. SEITZ. You all know very well that CSCE has only just now moved into another stage in its development, that this was in many respects the purpose of the charter of Paris and the Summit that took place there in late November, was, in many respects, to hail a forthcoming new stage in CSCE.

And in so doing, the charter of Paris, for the first time within CSCE, establishes some institutions. They're thin on substance at the moment. I think the general agreement among the states is that one has to gradually develop these institutions over a period of time, not try to overload them, not try to develop situations in which the CSCE turns out to be powerless and paralyzed. And in our long-term interest, we want the CSCE to develop in that particular way.

On the other hand, what Paris also produced is a kind of a structure where there is an intensification of these intercessional meetings that are going on. Valletta is the first one. That had already been foreseen. But two more have now been added to it, one on democratic institutions and one on minorities.

And these are all scheduled to take place, along with the human rights conference in Moscow. So there is almost a rolling set of conferences that are now under the CSCE heading.

Second, what it establishes, which is new, is a conflict prevention center. The conflict prevention center itself has provided an opportunity where the 34 delegations that are present in Vienna can be called together. And it was, in fact, those 34 delegations that happened to have been available to respond to the Austrian proposal for a special meeting in CSCE, which was rejected, but which, nonetheless, provided an opportunity. And there is, of course, now the secretariat and an elections office.

In addition to that, there is a structure of political consultations that did not exist before. It is the senior officials which you referred to, Chairman. They will be having their first meeting at the end of this month, probably another one in May, probably another one on the very eve of a ministerial. Ministerials will occur at least once a year, at the head of government level about every 2 years.

So the result of all of this is that CSCE has begun to take on a kind of predictable structure and pattern of work. And in doing so, when events such as this happen, it means that the attention of the CSCE is inescapable, that there will continue to be in different ways opportunities to not only address this issue, but keep it forward, keep it public, keep the pressure on.

And, as I say, I doubt whether the timing of this much had CSCE in mind, but if you look what happened, when the events of last week occurred, it was on the very eve of the opening of the Valletta meeting. The Valletta meeting wasn't meant to address this. And, yet, here was an opportunity to do so.

It was on the eve of this what was essentially an administrative meeting that was taking place in Vienna, but that provided the platform for the Austrians to make their proposal.

And it has occurred two weeks before this first senior officials' meeting. The first senior officials' meeting was also meant to be largely administrative, how you organize the ministerial, who should be in charge of the conflict prevention center.

But I can assure you that the first item of business for the senior officials' meeting is going to be the Baltics. So these are opportunities that come along and that are assured by the structure that has been created as a result of the charter of Paris.

I'm sorry that was a little lengthy, but this is really the first opportunity to see how this sort of thing relates.

Mr. CARDIN. Basically, you're saying there are going to be many opportunities within the process to raise this issue and make sure this issue is somewhat discussed, and hopefully addressed, by action at CSCE. You said that perhaps the Soviets will understand that it's not just the United States——

Mr. SEITZ. Correct.

Mr. CARDIN [continuing]. But a broader community of interest, that is seeking changes to occur, in which they themselves over the last two or three years have said that they have a vital stake, in a way, that this is the trade-off for the Soviet Union in terms of a change in its strategic position in Central Europe is that it will continue to be counted as a member of the European community, the wider community of nations.

Well, how the hell can you do that if the community of nations in Europe is based on market economies, democratic values, free elections, et cetera, and then you see what's going on in the Baltics?

It is so self-defeating for the Soviet Union. Really, it is so contrary to the objectives that the leadership over the last two or three years has said that it is seeking. And it's so unnecessary.

I mean, really, the Baltic states should be given their independence, period. The Soviet Union has got big troubles to deal with. They ought to deal with those and leave the Baltic states alone and independent.

Thank you.

Chairman HOYER. Mr. Secretary, I have to leave, and I'm going to ask Congressman Richardson to chair and we will let you go no later than 3 o'clock. If you will stay until 3 o'clock, Mr. Ritter has other questions.

Let me say that one concern I have and I think the commissioners have had as we see a more regularized, institutional, perhaps bureaucratic CSCE—and I know Secretary Baker is concerned about that as well and we're trying to keep the bureaucracy small.

But as we regularize an institution, as opposed to the ad hoc process that we have had in place, and we are confronted with very substantial human rights violations, there is at times a tendency to sort of low-key them because of the institutional nature of the institution in which you participate.

One of the great strengths, I think, of the Helsinki process and one of the things that from the Soviet standpoint came about, which they never expected, was that it provided a forum for confrontation, a forum for airing grievous human rights violations of participant members and, because of the spotlight on those violations, is perceived by Pavlov and many, many others, the new President of Poland, as being one of the key elements in their reform movements.

I would hope that you would raise at this meeting in the strongest possible terms the human rights issues, not just to the Baltic states, but any other human rights violations, that we keep as part of the four-pronged agenda human rights very definitely as, I would say, much greater than 25 percent because around that issue hinges all of the other issues, including, of course, the issues of war and peace, in which we find ourselves so inextricably involved today.

Thank you for your very strong statement, Mr. Secretary, and look forward to working with you.

Mr. Richardson?

Mr. SEITZ. Thank you, Chairman.

Mr. RICHARDSON. Mr. Chairman, thank you. Thank you very much.

Secretary Seitz, as of January 1989, the United States Government is on record as stating that there are no more indisputable political prisoners in the Soviet Union. Now, if the Soviet government threw Baltic draft resisters into jail, wouldn't they, given our nonrecognition policy, be considered political prisons under Principle 10 of the Helsinki Accords on the good faith compliance clause with other international agreements?

Mr. SEITZ. Well, Congressman, actually, when it comes to the Baltic states, I think there are a number of examples. If somebody is actually thrown into jail in one of the Baltic states because that person is following what is permitted by Baltic law but that law comes into conflict with Soviet law and the Soviet authorities then move to arrest the person, that's basically the nub of the problem.

And it is basically for that that we have said that the only way this is actually going to happen; that is, Baltic independence, is through dialogue and negotiation.

And, again, I can't give you a legal answer on that. I'm sure it's a very tricky one. And so I would have to take that back. It's very much like the letter that the Chairman sent on the applicability of the Geneva Convention on the question of conscription and all. And our legal adviser is reviewing that.

I think the stronger point, or the one that I would wish to address, is that that sort of a situation is exactly what the political problem is all about, and what we want is for the Soviet authorities to get back to a productive dialogue with the representatives of the Baltic states, and a peaceful non-threatening dialogue.

Mr. RICHARDSON. Mr. Secretary, I am going to recognize my colleague. I apologize if this was discussed during my absence, but I, as I mentioned in my opening statement, believe that we shouldn't throw in the towel on the U.S.-Soviet relationship.

Obviously, I don't want to riddle everything with cliches. Things are a little bit on the ropes now. But my hope is that the situation there stabilizes.

And I guess I come to the nub of the possible problem there. And that is: Is Mr. Gorbachev in control? What is the correct version of the television station seizure? He claims that it was a local military commander. There are variations of stories there.

But I guess my question is: Can we conclude arms control treaties with an entity that has a foreign policy if they can't control their military commanders?

Now, this is very delicate, but I wondered if you'd address this. Is Mr. Gorbachev in control?

Mr. SEITZ. Well, of course, there's no good answer to that. And on the matter of what actually happened at the television station and the degree to which he was involved, it is a "What did he know?" and "When did he know it?" kind of question.

I think that the only approach that we can take to this is that he is responsible. And in some respects, it seems to me not precisely

relevant whether so and so took the decision or so and so took the decision. It's really who is accountable for this decision.

This is the President of the Soviet Union. He is, therefore, responsible. And if he disapproves of this and how it occurs, then those who made that kind of rogue decision should be held accountable, just as it would be here. And, yet, I don't see any sign of that.

Mr. RICHARDSON. Mr. Secretary, I'm going to let you off the hook on that one. I hope he's still in control, and I hope things stabilize there, but I know the delicacy here.

And I wish you the best in the days ahead to make him recognize the entire process of perestroika, the entire hopes of the world, that we don't have an East-West conflict, the human rights advances.

And let me tell you. I was in Israel recently. And they are taking almost 2,000 Israeli Jews every day.

Mr. SEITZ. Right.

Mr. RICHARDSON. Gorbachev did this. Somebody did this at times when things were stabilized and there was a human rights policy. This is why I just don't want to terminate this productive relationship that we have had, and I hope we resolve things. And I wish you the best.

I recognize my colleague.

Mr. RITTER. I thank my colleague for recognizing me. And I guess I would say that the resignation of Shevardnadze, I think, was an ominous sign. And Mr. Gorbachev is presiding over all the above. And the lack of expression of any remorse or regret or sympathy or sorrow with families, I think, is a very ominous sign. And at some point there is only so far you can hope. And you have to deal with what is in front of you, what the facts are.

I might add that President Gorbachev has sent in the commander in chief of Baltic ground forces, General Verenyikov, who is one of their top combat generals in the Soviet Union. Before this he made his mark as the leader of ground forces in Afghanistan. And he's a very, very tough cookie.

I wanted to just talk for a moment about: Given the urgency of the situation, we in the Helsinki Commission, at our Monday press conference, advocated sending a high-level delegation to Vilnius. And I would say that's a bipartisan delegation. I think it should be composed of administration officials and members of Congress.

Would you like to comment on that simply to provide some kind of presence on the ground, on the scenes and support the duly elected representatives to—as not even going that far, to engage in fact-finding and sit down with the various parties, at least, to have shown some presence prior to the ultimate and complete and final demise, which, you know, if you look at all the signals out there—and they didn't just start, as I said in my opening statement, a week ago, but they started several months ago. What would be your views on it?

Mr. SEITZ. I think Congressman Wolf also raised the same idea. And I said that it is something that we have considered. We have considered others way to raise that presence. That's one, and there are a couple of others that we are looking at right now.

I would note that the Foreign Minister of Iceland wished to go to the Baltic states and was refused permission to enter by the Soviet authorities.

Mr. RITTER. Should we perhaps engage our CSCE colleague states and seek perhaps to make this a CSCE delegation?

Mr. SEITZ. Yes.

Mr. RITTER. I mean, if they're going to turn us down, it's simply another signal. But I think it would be remiss of us if we at least didn't make the effort.

Mr. SEITZ. I agree with that.

Mr. RITTER. Is the State Department prepared to take a leadership role in promoting the visitation of some CSCE delegation to Vilnius?

Mr. SEITZ. Let me just say that we have——

Mr. RITTER. The hour is late.

Mr. SEITZ [continuing]. A number of ideas, which we are discussing with both our allies and other CSCE partners.

Mr. RITTER. I would recommend that you do consider the Helsinki process and the Helsinki Commission. In line with what the Chairman was saying, we have had substantial success in our endeavors because perhaps we didn't go all the time according to the book and we had flexibility. We had mobility. We sometimes hit them from blind sides. They didn't quite know how to handle some of the American political dimensions, the NGO involved and the like.

And I think we don't want to lose that kind of flexibility and mobility if we make this fully a kind of stripe-pants exercise, with no pejoratives there, but you need the breadth and the depth and sometimes the esprit and the elan that go with the Helsinki process.

Mr. Chairman, that's all I have. I thank you for yielding to me.

Mr. RICHARDSON. Mr. Seitz, let me conclude this hearing, first of all, by thanking you. My understanding is that the Chairman informed you that it wouldn't be more than an hour, and you have been here most gallantly and responsively.

And let me again wish you the very best in the days ahead. I have had the pleasure of knowing you when you were DCM in Great Britain, and I know you've got a tough job. And I hope we haven't made it more difficult for you, but I think you have recognized the intensity of my colleagues on this issue, and I thank you.

And the hearing stands adjourned.

Mr. SEITZ. Thank you, Congressman.

[Whereupon, at 3 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

STATEMENT
DENNIS DeCONCINI
COCHAIRMAN, HELSINKI COMMISSION

BALTIC CRISIS BRIEFING
JANUARY 17, 1991, 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.
210 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

THE HELSINKI COMMISSION HAS CALLED THIS BRIEFING BECAUSE OF OUR GRAVE CONCERN OVER THE RECENT BRUTAL CRACKDOWN IN LITHUANIA AND LATVIA. WE ARE VERY GRATEFUL TO ASSISTANT SECRETARY

SEITZ FOR RESPONDING SO PROMPTLY TO OUR REQUEST THAT HE BRIEF US ON THE SITUATION IN THE BALTICS.

PRESIDENT GORBACHEV'S PUBLIC STATEMENTS AND REPRESSIVE ACTIONS OVER THE PAST FEW DAYS CALL TO MIND THE OMINOUS WARNING OF SAKHAROV WHEN HE CAUTIONED THAT GORBACHEV'S EFFORTS TO AMASS SWEEPING

DICTATORIAL POWERS CONTRADICTED HIS POLICY OF DEMOCRATIZATION. SCHEVARDNASE RESIGNED BECAUSE HE BELIEVED A DICTATORSHIP WAS, IN FACT, COMING. GORBACHEV'S LATEST STATEMENT CALLING FOR A REPEAL OF THE FREEDOM OF PRESS LAW ONLY REINFORCES THE FEARS OF MANY THAT GLASNOST AND PERESTROIKA ARE BEING REPLACED WITH REPRESSIVE POLICIES OF THE

COLD WAR ERA. HOWEVER, WHAT IS MOST REPREHENSIBLE IS GORBACHEV'S CYNICAL MANIPULATION OF THE IRAQ CRISIS TO UNDERTAKE A BRUTAL AND VIOLENT CRACKDOWN IN THE BALTICS. THIS WILL SERIOUSLY AFFECT U.S./SOVIET RELATIONS.

IN MARCH, 1990, LITHUANIA'S DEMOCRATICALLY-ELECTED

GOVERNMENT TOOK A BOLD STEP TO RECLAIM THAT COUNTRY'S INDEPENDENCE. I HAVE BEEN REVIEWING FORMER LITHUANIAN PRIME MINISTER PRUNSKIENE'S TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HELSINKI COMMISSION LAST APRIL. I AM STRUCK BY HOW PRESCIENT HER COMMENTS WERE. I WOULD LIKE TO BRIEFLY HIGHLIGHT A FEW OF THESE. SHE CALLED ON THE WEST TO "HELP

GORBACHEV" BY SUPPORTING LITHUANIA. HER POINT, WHICH THE UNITED STATES AND WESTERN EUROPE SEEMED TO MISS, WAS A SIMPLE ONE: THE WEST WOULD STRENGTHEN GORBACHEV'S HAND AGAINST CONSERVATIVE ELEMENTS IN THE SOVIET UNION BECAUSE RECOGNITION OF LITHUANIA'S INDEPENDENCE BY THE WEST WOULD BE A "TREMENDOUS VICTORY FOR

DEMOCRATIZATION IN THE SOVIET UNION."

MRS. PRUNSKIENE CAUTIONED THAT THE WEST "VALUED PRESIDENT GORBACHEV'S PERESTROIKA AS A WAY OF INSURING HUMAN AND NATIONAL RIGHTS TO THE POINT THAT THE PROCESS BEGAN TO BE VALUED MORE THAN THE GOAL, THE REALIZATION OF THESE RIGHTS."

REFERRING TO GORBACHEV, THE PRIME MINISTER COMMENTED THAT " EVEN THE WORLD'S DARLING DOES NOT HAVE THE MONOPOLISTIC RIGHT TO DECIDE THE FATE OF OTHER NATIONS, HERE WE CANNOT HELP HIM AT ALL. FOR OTHERWISE SYMPATHY DEGENERATES INTO TOADYISM AND THE LATTER GIVES BIRTH TO A CULT."

LITHUANIANS AND THE PEOPLES OF THE OTHER BALTIC STATES CHALLENGED THE WEST TO STAND BEHIND OUR POLICY OF NON-RECOGNITION OF THE FORCIBLE ANNEXATION OF THE BALTICS AND WE, IN MY VIEW, HAVE FAILED THAT TEST. WE, INSTEAD, HAVE HELD OUR POLICY HOSTAGE TO THE BELIEF THAT THE REBIRTH OF DEMOCRACY IN THE SOVIET UNION DEPENDS ON MR.

GORBACHEV. THE EVENTS OF THE PAST FEW DAYS CALL THE WISDOM OF THIS POLICY INTO QUESTION. IT IS TIME NOW TO TAKE MRS. PRUNSKIENE'A ADVICE AND STAND ON PRINCIPLE BY RECOGNIZING LITHUANIA'S INDEPENDENCE.

CSCE COMMISSION HEARING
JANUARY 17, 1991
SOVIET CRACKDOWN IN LITHUANIA
OPENING STATEMENT OF REP. DON RITTER
RANKING HOUSE MEMBER

Today while our attention is focused on the Iraqi military's dislodgement from Kuwait, the Baltic people bravely face the might of the Soviet military and the wrath of its secret security forces. With the brutal crackdown in Lithuania and the possibility of its expansion, Congress and the Administration must draw on all its strength and rise to confront this equally ugly manifestation of naked aggression by the Soviet military.

It is time for America and this Administration to translate its words in support of Baltic people into concrete action. I am suggesting a total reassessment of U.S. policy toward the Soviet Union; I am talking about a moratorium on all types of U.S. assistance to the Soviet Union especially economic assistance; I am talking about a U.S. boycott of the Moscow CSCE Human Rights meeting; I am talking about an outcry, like Mrs. Andrei Sakharov's, to strip President Gorbachev of his Noble Peace Prize.

We no longer excuse Gorbachev by blaming Soviet-Baltic policy on renegade elements of the Soviet military or the old guard. Gorbachev has gone on the record as saying that the crackdown this weekend was strictly an "internal matter" of the Soviet Union. Furthermore, he blamed the Lithuanian people and their elected Parliament for the Soviet military's violence. This is Stalinist rhetoric that upholds Stalinist actions—this is similar to the rhetoric used in '56 and '68 in Hungary and Czechoslovakia to justify the crackdown there.

And further, it has been clear for sometime that the Soviet strategy to crush the political aspirations of the Baltic people was much more clever, and more extensive and comprehensive than we here in Congress are likely to be aware of. We cannot easily see the stealthy actions of the KGB, MVD and GRU in their covert war to provoke inter-ethnic violence so as to invite Moscow's military intervention. We cannot easily see their covert war of economic, political and personal intimidation and coercion. Indeed, what we saw in Lithuania this past weekend is just the tip of the iceberg.

The Administration has acted to staunchly oppose the occupation and annexation of Kuwait by Saddam. Now, Congress and the Administration must begin to act—not just talk—to stop the same international injustice in Lithuania and the other Baltic nations.

At this time of crisis and war in the Gulf, let us take a deep breath for strength, and let us act forthrightly and swiftly before more innocent blood is spilled in the Baltic nations. As we pray for our servicemen and women now in the Persian Gulf, let us now pray for the brave people of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.

JOHN EDWARD PORTER
10TH DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS

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CONGRESSIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS CAUCUS
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CONGRESSMAN JOHN EDWARD PORTER (R-IL)
OPENING STATEMENT

Helsinki Commission
"Soviet Crackdown in the Baltic States"
Thursday, January 17, 1991

As members of the Helsinki Commission, we are here today to closely investigate the outrageous attack on the Lithuanian people by the Soviet military this weekend. After an inspiring period of warming relations between the Soviet Union and the United States, I was shocked and dismayed to learn of this brutal Soviet attack on the innocent people of Lithuania.

As Operation Desert Storm bears heavily upon us, US-Soviet unity is crucial. At this critical juncture the Soviet Union has chosen to use bloody force to suppress the Lithuanians pleas of independence.

What the Soviet Union may not realize is that we can, and we will, remove our recent offer of generous economic assistance and food aid if Moscow does not adhere to international laws of human rights. By waiving the Jackson-Vanik amendment, the United States administration was demonstrating its faith in glasnost and its inherent potential to bring economic and social stability to the Soviet Union. But if the rights of each individual are not respected, we can no longer have this faith. Gorbachev must take firm and unmistakable steps to reign back the conservative and military forces that condoned the use of force this weekend or every Western nation will call into question the reasons it has extended aid to Moscow.

Yesterday and today tens of thousands of grieving Lithuanians streamed through Vilnius to pay their respects to those who died in this weekend's bloody events, bringing back haunting memories of the Chinese massacres of peaceful demonstrators in China and Tibet.

In addition, reports of 84 missing people in Lithuania were disclosed late Monday by a Lithuanian government spokesman. Some are believed to have been killed during the Sunday assault on the radio and television broadcast center.

The implications of this weekend's events on the other Baltic states are also bleak. The National Salvation Committee, an arm of the pro-Communist Moscow communist party organized in Lithuania to convince the people that they do not want freedom and independence, has been formed in the republics of Latvia and Estonia. There the people wait in fear, poised for similar attacks by the Soviet military to silence their cries for independence.

THIS STATIONERY PRINTED ON PAPER MADE OF RECYCLED FIBERS

Tuesday, Soviet troops disarmed cadets at a military school in Riga, Latvia, similar to what occurred in Lithuania just before the attack on the television towers. Yesterday, one Latvian was shot by the Soviet military.

The truth about the Soviet regime has become painfully obvious to the world. Democratization and liberalization of the Soviet economy will be accepted as long as the power of the ruling elite is not threatened. As soon as it became apparent to the Soviets that freedom for Lithuanian could lead to calls for freedom and self-determination in the other Baltic States and the possible disintegration of the Soviet Union, the military chose to use all means possible to send a clear message of intimidation to the Lithuanians and other Baltic States.

If the Soviet Union believes that the war in the Persian Gulf will close the eyes of the world to the events happening in the Baltic States, it is grievously mistaken. The denial of the human rights of those in Vilnius is no less important than the human rights of people suffering in the Persian Gulf. Gorbachev, as the current Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, the eyes of the world are upon you.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR FRANK LAUTENBERG

HELSINKI COMMISSION HEARING ON BALTICS

Mr. Chairman, I commend you for holding these timely hearings on the threat to peaceful change and democratic reform in the Soviet Union.

We are all outraged by the brutal killing by Soviet military forces on January 13 of at least 13 Lithuanian civilians defending their democratically elected government. This threat to peaceful and democratic government should not be overlooked because of the Persian Gulf crisis.

The killing of unarmed civilians in Vilnius, the untruthful official Soviet reporting of these events, the threats to the other Baltic republics —— amount to a dramatic reversal of the course of peaceful reform in the Soviet Union and improvements in Soviet—American relations.

Mr. Chairman, when we read the official Soviet line on these developments, one thing is clear: The big lie is back in the Baltics.

Now we are receiving reports that pro—Moscow Communist elements are calling on the central Soviet government to dissolve the elected governments of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia and replace them with direct rule from Moscow.

President Gorbachev is unwilling to publicly accept responsibility for the deaths in Lithuania. Some say he was pressured to take these outrageous steps. All this raises serious questions about Mr. Gorbachev's continued commitment to reform or his own control of the situation.

As the Congressional members of the Helsinki Commission, we have a special responsibility to express the outrage of the American people to the Soviet assaults against the Baltic states. Since their forced incorporation into the Soviet Union in 1940 —— never recognized by the United States —— the Baltic peoples have aspired to regain their independence.

The threat to freedom and democratic government in the Baltic states requires a strong and unequivocal response from the United States.

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President Gorbachev cannot evade responsibility for the deadly results in the Baltics of a Soviet policy of confrontation and repression. Nor should our Government shrink from expressing our concern to President Gorbachev. These steps should not go unanswered.

President Gorbachev must know that American credits, American cooperation, and American trade are not won by his personality or his charisma. They are won by real, concrete steps toward liberalization and reform. The Soviet Union has taken a giant step backwards; that must have a price.

Yesterday, the Senate took a stand, and called upon the President to suspend all technical exchnages; to delay the provision of MFN; and to consider the suspension of all economic benefits, until the Soviet Union ends its assault on Democratic government in the Baltic states.

I hope we learn today that the Administration will take a strong affirmative stand on behalf of freedom and democracy in the Baltics. U.S. policy must also be clear and forceful at the upcoming meeting of national experts on the Peaceful Settlement of Disputes in Malta.

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Whether we have summit should depend on whether Mr. Gorbachev repairs the damage of the last few days.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

STATEMENT OF COMMISSIONER WILLIAM D. FRITTS, JR.
CSCE HEARING - JANUARY 17, 1991

WITNESS: ASSISTANT SECRETARY SEITZ, DEPARTMENT OF STATE

SOVIET ACTIVITY IN THE BALTIC STATES

I thank the Chairman and Co-Chairman for scheduling this most critical hearing. The situation in Lithuania today is obviously a very delicate and complicated crisis. Everyone is painfully aware of the actions taken by the Soviet Union within the last two weeks in Lithuania, with further moves anticipated in Latvia and Estonia.

The questions we all hear being asked more and more frequently deserve answers. Have glasnost and perestroika been a smokescreen, behind which the Soviet Union remains the same totalitarian empire with which we have become so familiar? Is Gorbachev more intent on remaining in power than on moving forward with reforms?

Today, Mr Gorbachev asks the West for assistance in supporting his NEP (New Economic Policy). History tells us that the founder of the Soviet state, Lenin himself, embarked on a new economic plan in the early twenties. The West then, too, heaved a collective sigh of relief, only to discover quickly that the bear had not changed its habits.

Clearly, there exists today a major crisis within the Soviet Union. It is equally clear that there has been a power struggle within the Soviet ruling apparat. Assistant Secretary Seitz has been supportive of the efforts of CSCE, and, through his staff, has been of great assistance to me personally as the Department of Commerce Commissioner of CSCE. I am sure that his insights on what the Soviet activities in the Baltic States portend will be of great value to the Commission.

This Commission has justifiably prided itself on its record in support of human rights, particularly within the Soviet Union itself. Do the events in Lithuania signal that our hopes for a more tractable Soviet Union have been dashed?

On May 3rd, 1990, this Commission held a hearing to receive the perspective of Lithuanian Prime Minister Kazimiera Prunskiene. On that occasion, I stated in my remarks that I was certain that Lithuania would soon join the family of nations which enjoy and exercise the rights and responsibilities inherent in free and democratic societies.

On August 8, 1990, Boris Yeltsin, President of the Russian Republic of the Soviet Union, stated, "If a people strive for independence, you cannot restrain them by force."

The dead and wounded in Lithuania this past week make my expectation seem optimistic, and President Yeltsin's remark instructive and perhaps ominous. But, there is a much more fundamental issue exposed in the treatment of the Baltic States by the Soviets.

There seems to be two Soviet Unions. One is led by a President who has recently been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. It is a nation which, within the past year, has been a signatory to the Bonn document, committing the parties to open and free economic policies; the Copenhagen Human Rights document; and the Charter of Paris, committing its signatories to the peaceful resolution of conflicts and mutual security in Europe.

The other Soviet Union is the nation which supresses its own people in Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan as well as the Baltics. It has killed and wounded relatively defenseless demonstrators in Lithuania, and this the free world will not tolerate.

The Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe has won worldwide acclaim for its success in defending the human rights of individuals and minorities against repressive states. To meet its obligations, under both the Helsinki Final Act and the Charter of Paris, the Commission depends on the best information available on the activities and intentions of the Soviet Union.

The world seems to be faced with a clear example of the saying, "What you do speaks so loudly, it is difficult to hear what you say." The actions of the Soviets this past week speak louder than the rhetoric of glasnost and perestroika.

We all hope that what we have witnessed is an aberration. That it is not a new, hard line policy of the Soviet Union. We would like to believe the Gorbachev promises of 1989 and 1990, rather than the deeds of 1991. It is here that Assistant Secretary Seitz will, I am sure, be of outstanding assistance. Thank you, Mr Chairman.

COMMISSION ON
SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE
CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
237 HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING ANNEX 2
WASHINGTON, DC 20515

(202) 225-1901

January 22, 1991

Raymond G.H. Seitz
Assistant Secretary of State for European
and Canadian Affairs
Department of State
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Mr. Seitz:

As we mentioned in the Commission's letter of January 18, 1991, we would appreciate the Department's response to certain additional questions that time did not permit asking during your appearance before the Commission on January 17.

They are the following:

1. In November 1990, a Treasury Department official was prohibited by the U.S. Government from travelling to Vilnius to participate with Lithuanian officials and businessmen in a seminar on how to establish a free market economy. What was the reason for this prohibition?

2. You stated at the hearing that President Gorbachev is responsible for the tragedy in Vilnius even if he did not directly order the army to seize the television station. We note that Lithuanian Foreign Minister Saudargas told the members of the European Parliament on January 18 that Gorbachev is an almost powerless puppet and that "mad generals" are running the Soviet Union. Is there any further information available as to whether President Gorbachev did or did not order the army into action?

3. You mentioned that the United States supports observer status at CSCE for the Baltic States "keeping in mind the workings of CSCE". We hope this expression of support will soon be implemented as U.S. policy. Does the United States envision proposing observer status for one or more of the Baltic States at an upcoming CSCE meeting, such as the Meeting on Cultural Heritage to be held in Cracow, Poland in May?

Assistant Secretary Seitz
January 22, 1991

During the hearings, you referred to the State Department's Legal Office study regarding conscription of citizens of the Baltic States into the Soviet military vis-a-vis the Geneva Convention (IV) of 1949. We would be interested in any further response that you may have on this issue in line with Department findings and policy.

Your prompt attention to these questions is greatly appreciated.

With best wishes,

Sincerely yours,

DENNIS DeCONCINI
Co-Chairman

STENY H. HOYER
Chairman

United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

January 28, 1991

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Following the December 17, 1990 hearing on the Developments in the Baltics at which Raymond Seitz testified, you submitted additional questions for the record. Please find enclosed responses to those questions with one exception.

With regard to your interest in the Department's legal analysis of the applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention to the Baltic States, I am pleased to inform you that a full response should be forthcoming this week.

Sincerely,

Janet G. Mullins
Assistant Secretary
Legislative Affairs

Enclosures:
As stated.

The Honorable
Steny Hoyer, Chairman,
Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe,
Congress of the United States.

Question for the Record submited to Assistant Secretary Seitz
Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe
January 17, 1991

Q.1. In November 1990, a Treasury Department officials was prohibited by the U.S. Government from travelling to Vilnius to participate with Lithuanian officials and businessmen in a seminar on how to establish a free-market economy. What was the reason for this prohibition?

A. All overseas travel by senior Administration officials is subject to approval by the National Security Council staff. Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Treasury Bruce Bartlett's request for approval to visit Lithuania in November 1990 was reviewed carefully and denied. Mr. Bartlett's trip was to be a private visit under non-governmental auspices, with the purpose of assisting the Lithuanian government in setting up its own tax system. The NSC staff concluded that Mr. Bartlett's involvement in such a private visit could not be separated from his official duties as a senior Administration official. It was also determined that it would be inappropriate for a high-ranking official of the U.S. government to insert himself into the tense and difficult political situation in the Baltic States.

The denial of Mr. Bartlett's travel request did not reflect any overall prohibition of U.S. government travel to the Baltic States. The Administration has encouraged U.S. government travel to Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia in appropriate circumstances.

Question for the Record submited to Assistant Secretary Seitz
Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe
January 17, 1991

Q.2. You stated at the hearing that President Gorbachev is responsible for the tragedy in Vilnius even if he did not directly order the army to seize the television station. We note that Lithuanian Foreign Minister Saudargas told the members of the European Parliament on January 18 that Gorbachev is an almost powerless puppet and that "mad generals" are running the Soviet Union. Is there any further information available as to whether President Gorbachev did or did not order the army into action?

A. We do not have a complete picture of the decisionmaking process that led to the use of force by Soviet troops in Latvia and Lithuania. President Gorbachev has stated that he did not order the troops to seize the television tower, but we have no indpendent means of verifying that statement. We have no reason to believe that Gorbachev has lost control of Soviet security units. Regardless of the actual chain of command in this instance, however, Gorbachev and his government are ultimately responsible for the actions of forces under their authority.

Question for the Record submitted to Assistant Secretary Seitz
Commission of Security and Cooperation in Europe
January 17, 1991

Q.3. You mentioned that the United States supports observer status at CSCE for the Baltic States "keeping in mind the workings of CSCE." We hope this expression of support will soon be implemented as U.S. policy. Does the United States envision proposing observer status for one or more of the Baltic States at an upcoming CSCE meeting, such as the Meeting on Cultural Heritage to be held in Cracow, Poland in May?

A. Our position on the Baltic states is clear: they have the right, once they have gained effective independence, to choose and be granted full CSCE membership. In the meantime, the U.S. is ready to join consensus in granting them observer status. Such status requires, however, the agreement of all CSCE members. As a practical matter, such a consensus is not currently possible. Because of this, we have no plans at this time to propose granting the Baltic states observer status at the upcoming Krakow Symposium on Cultural Heritage. We will, however, be working with our allies and friends in CSCE to ensure that Baltic representatives obtain access to that meeting.